

## Operating the Airport

### 1. Authority and Responsibility

Sanford's authority with respect to airports is found in the N. C. General Statutes. North Carolina municipalities are empowered to own, improve, maintain, operate and regulate airports outside or inside their corporate limits. Tax and utility revenues can be used for airport support, and land can be acquired by the use of eminent domain. Municipalities can delegate municipal authority to agencies of their own choosing and can adopt and enforce "airport zoning regulations" to protect landing approaches to the airport from obstruction. Municipal officers share the responsibility of enforcing the rules and regulations of the Civil Aeronautics Administration (now the FAA) with regard to the safe operation of aircraft.

The Sanford Board of Aldermen has assigned its powers and duties regarding the municipal airport to the eight-man Sanford Airport Commission. The question of how the airport will be administered had not been decided at the time of this writing.

### 2. Financial Matters

Small airports may, in some cases, earn revenues sufficient to cover operating and maintenance expenses, but seldom do they earn enough to cover land acquisition, construction, and related debt service costs. But airports are considered useful to communities whether or not they pay for themselves through charges to users. In this they are similar to streets, highways, sidewalks, schools and parks, which are beneficial to persons whether they personally use them or not.

To the large majority of taxpayers who do not use the airport for business or pleasure, the financial benefits of a local airport are presumed to come indirectly: to the industrial employee and his family, from the expansion or continuance of employment opportunities offered by firms that may prefer locating plants where company planes can land; and to local merchants, property owners, and other parties selling their services in the local market, from the expansion or maintenance of a population of industrial employees and their incomes.